

# **Gifted Education**

## **Lexington City Schools**

### ***A Parent's Guide***

The purpose of this guide is to provide parents, guardians, and the general public information concerning gifted services offered in Lexington City Schools. This guide is based on Lexington City Schools' ***Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted***, the ***Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students***, and collaborative input and guidance from the staff and Gifted Advisory Committee for Lexington City Schools. A copy of the local plan may be found on the division website at [www.lexedu.org](http://www.lexedu.org).

### **Lexington City Schools Administrators and Gifted Coordinators**

<b>Interim Superintendent</b>	John Reynolds	(540) 463-7146
<b>Assistant Superintendent</b>	Rebecca Walters	(540) 463-7146
<b>Harrington Waddell Elementary School</b>	Melanie Camden, Principal	(540) 463-5353
<b>Lylburn Downing Middle School</b>	Jason White, Principal	(540) 463-3532
<b>Gifted Coordinator</b>	Jordan Clark	(540) 463-3532
<b>Gifted Instructor</b>	Laura Joyner	(540) 463-3532

## **Introduction**

### ***What is gifted education?***

Gifted Education is a special educational program that nurtures and develops the talents and abilities of students in kindergarten through eighth grade who exhibit high intellectual aptitude and offers identified students appropriate educational experiences and opportunities. The Gifted Program in the Lexington City Schools is integrated into the total school curriculum. The program provides differentiated instruction for students through:

- Enrichment opportunities
- Advanced content and pacing of instruction
- Projects and research
- Problem solving opportunities
- Higher level thinking in academic products
- Cross-curricular study and projects

## Identification

### ***How are students identified for gifted services?***

The steps below briefly describe the identification process:

1. The student, parent, guardian, peer, community member, teacher, or other school personnel submits a referral to the gifted coordinator.
2. The gifted coordinator reviews the students' sustained high performance in class and strong performance in provided enrichment opportunities.
3. The student completes the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) screening: referred K-1 students (end of March), 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students new to Lexington or who were referred after the spring testing date (March) of the prior school year, all 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students (end of March), middle school students as referred for additional evaluation. Third graders take the full battery of CogAT tests in November. These results are used as part of the identification process. *\*K-2 students may be referred for participation in enrichment activities and programs or for gifted program identification. Students in grades 3-8 may be referred for gifted program identification.*
4. The gifted coordinator collects student assessment results and any other needed student portfolio data for review.
5. A committee (consisting of the principal, gifted coordinator, and other school staff) meet to review the collected student data and determine eligibility.
6. The parent(s)/guardian(s) is notified of the eligibility decision and, if eligible, permission to provide services is requested.
7. With permission, gifted services begin.

## Services

### ***What gifted services are available at the elementary level?***

#### **K-2 Approach: A Program for Extension and Enrichment**

In the early primary grades, services include differentiated instruction by the classroom teacher with support from specialists and the gifted coordinator. Differentiation includes the design and/or selection of curriculum, instructional practices, grouping strategies, varied resources, pacing, and assessment of learning. Modifications to curriculum and instruction is varied to address the individualized needs of students.

- **In-class extension:**
  - **Language Arts**
    - Instruction is designed to include whole group instruction on grade level standards and small group instruction that is differentiated by reading level. Differentiated instruction includes the appropriate materials, process, and product for the level of learning groups.
    - Writing instruction is also differentiated by varied learning levels.
      - Students are given creative writing assignments at least once per grading period and given some opportunities to self-select topics for writing.
  - **Math**
    - Math instruction includes a whole group lesson that addresses grade level standards and some small group instruction possibly combined with math centers or stations that allow for scaffolded learning experiences.
    - Pretesting may be used to identify "mastery" and plan for "challenge" or "enrichment" assignments for students.

- **Professional development** activity offerings support teachers in meeting the needs of exceptional learners.
  - Professional learning activities for K-5 and 6-8 may include the sharing of strategies and/or resources. Teachers at various grade levels and content areas have the opportunity to share strategies, projects, and resources that have been effective in meeting the needs of advanced learners. Teachers and gifted staff have the opportunity to request participation in professional learning conferences and workshops as available.
- **Additional extension opportunities** may be provided for "advanced" K, 1<sup>st</sup>, or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students through the library/computer lab and through the regular classrooms with literature, research, writing, or technology experiences that enhance the general curriculum
- **Increased collaboration between the gifted coordinator and the classroom teachers** will further support in-class enrichment opportunities. The gifted coordinator will help to set up a group e-mail, shared documents, and/or quarterly planning sessions with the grade level teams to assist with planning for enrichment/extension learning experiences in the classroom.
- In addition to services provided during the regular school day, our school division offers **enrichment programs** after school to help meet the intellectual and academic needs of students. These offerings are made available to students when volunteers are available.
- **Other resources or community offerings** will be shared with families through the gifted program newsletter, school newsletter, or website.

### **3-5 Approach: A Program for Extension, Enrichment, and Gifted Services**

In the upper elementary grades, services include differentiated instruction by the classroom teacher with support from specialists and the gifted coordinator. Differentiation includes the design and/or selection of curriculum, instructional practices, grouping strategies, varied resources, pacing, and assessment of learning. Modification to curriculum and instruction is varied to address the individualized needs of students.

#### **In-class extension:**

- **Language Arts**
  - Instruction is designed to include whole group instruction on grade level standards and small group instruction that is differentiated by reading level. Differentiated instruction includes the appropriate materials, process, and product for the level of learning groups.
  - Writing instruction is also differentiated by varied learning levels.
    - Students are given creative writing assignments at least once per grading period and given some opportunities to self-select topics for writing.
- **Math**
  - Math instruction includes a whole group lesson that addresses grade level standards and some small group instruction possibly combined with math centers or stations that allow for scaffolded learning experiences.
  - Pretesting may be used to identify "mastery" and plan for "challenge" or "enrichment" assignments for students.
- **Identified "gifted students"** will additionally be served through a **pull-out model** and through **push-in services** facilitated or led by the gifted coordinator. Jordan Clark, Gifted Coordinator, will work with Waddell staff to schedule weekly pull-out and/or push-in sessions for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade extension services.

- **Professional development** activity offerings support teachers in meeting the needs of exceptional learners.
  - Professional learning activities for K-5 and 6-8 may include the sharing of strategies and/or resources. Teachers at various grade levels and content areas have the opportunity to share strategies, projects, and resources that have been effective in meeting the needs of advanced learners. Teachers and gifted staff have the opportunity to request participation in professional learning conferences and workshops as available.
- In addition to services provided during the regular school day, our school division offers **enrichment programs** after school to help meet the intellectual and academic needs of students. These offerings are made available to students when volunteers are available.
- **Other resources or community offerings** will be shared with families through the gifted program newsletter, school newsletter, or website.

### ***What gifted services are available at the middle school level?***

#### **6-8 Approach: A Program for Extension, Enrichment, and Advanced Courses**

In the middle school grades, services include extension and enrichment through the English and Math programs, as well as advanced course offerings and after school enrichment opportunities. Modifications are made to the English and Math curriculum and instruction in grouping, content, learning process, products, and assessments.

- **English** teachers will collaborate with Laura Joyner, gifted support staff, to design and implement differentiated units, projects, or assignments during the year to enrich the curriculum for advanced learners.
- Laura Joyner will continue to partner with **sixth grade math** teachers to offer extension activities and support the design of differentiated units.
- Middle school students have the opportunity to complete **Pre-Algebra and Algebra** for high school credit in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- **Foreign Language courses** for high school credit are offered to students.
- **Professional development** activity offerings support teachers in meeting the needs of exceptional learners
  - Professional learning activities for K-5 and 6-8 may include the sharing of strategies and/or resources. Teachers at various grade levels and content areas have the opportunity to share strategies, projects, and resources that have been effective in meeting the needs of advanced learners. Teachers and gifted staff have the opportunity to request participation in professional learning conferences and workshops as available.
- In addition to services provided during the regular school day, our school division offers **enrichment programs** after school to help meet the intellectual and academic needs of students. These offerings are made available to students when volunteers are available.
- **Other resources or community offerings** will be shared with families through the gifted program newsletter, school newsletter, and website.

## **Parent and Community Involvement**

### ***How can families and the community become aware and involved with gifted education?***

Families and community member awareness and involvement in gifted education is encouraged through:

- Active participation in gifted activities and programs
- Read the quarterly LCS gifted program newsletter
- Membership on the local or state Gifted Advisory Committee
- Explore books and periodicals on gifted education available to parents at the local library, colleges, and universities
- Membership in the National Association for Gifted Children and/or the Virginia Association for the Gifted
- Attend conferences and local inservices featuring speakers sharing information on educational opportunities and gifted topics
- Seek student opportunities available in our local or regional communities

## **Additional Resources**

### ***What opportunities are available to students outside the school system?***

The following programs, academies, and schools offer qualifying students opportunities for continued learning in Virginia. Please visit their websites for more information.

#### **National Association for the Gifted**

[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

#### **University of Virginia Saturday and Summer Enrichment Program (SEP)**

<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/overview-enrichment-201>

#### **Valley Ridge Governor's School**

<https://sites.google.com/a/harrisonburg.k12.va.us/gcollins/home/governor-s-schools/vrgs>

#### **Jacob's Ladder Summer Enrichment Program**

<http://jladder.org/>

#### **Fine Arts in Rockbridge**

<http://fairva.org/>

#### **Summer Tech Camps at the University of Virginia**

<https://www.idtech.com/locations/virginia-summer-camps/charlottesville/id-tech-university-of-virginia/>

#### **Virginia Association for the Gifted**

[www.vagifted.org](http://www.vagifted.org)

